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continued, so as the feast of St. Philip and Jacob and of All-saints do not fall, nor any of them doth fall on Saturday or Sunday, and as often as the said feasts do fall, or any of them doth fall on Saturday or Sunday as aforesaid, that then the Monday next after the foresaid feasts, or any of them, and for two days from thence next following to be continued for ever, together with a pie-poudre\* court in the said markets and fairs, or in any of them, to be held with all other tolls, liberties, and free customs, profits, advantages, commodities, and emoluments, to the like markets or fairs, or markets aforesaid, after any manner appertaining or belonging, so as the said markets or

\* Pie-poudre is an old French law-phrase, signifying "dusty feet." It is applied to the jurisdiction given by some charters to determine, in a summary manner, causes of complaint, arising in a fair, the examinations, and decisions, on which were to be so speedy before the termination of the fair, that the complainants appeared with dusty-feet, or without previous preparation.

fairs be not, nor any of them be the annoyance or hurt of the neighbouring markets or fairs, or any of them; wherefore, we do, will, grant, and firmly command to be enjoyed by us, our heirs and successors, by these presents, that the mayor, sheriffs, burgesses, and commonalty of the said town of Knockfergus and their successors for ever, may have and hold the said markets, and chief markets or fairs in the place in the manner and form aforesaid in the place for ever, with all the liberties and free customs, as also with all profits, revenues, advantages, commodities, and emoluments, after any manner appertaining or belonging to such like markets, chief markets or fairs, without rendering account or paying any thing to us, our heirs or successors, for the same, so as the foresaid markets, chief markets or fairs, be not, nor any of them be, to the annoyance or hurt of the neighbour markets, chief-markets, or fairs.

(To be Concluded in our next.)

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF DISTINGUISHED PERSONS.

### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF MADAME DE STAHL.

"O ! woman ! in our hours of ease,  
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,  
And variable as the shade,  
By the light, quivering aspen made :  
When pain and anguish wring the brow,  
A ministering angel thou."—

SCOTT'S MARMION.

MADAME DE STAHL's history is the reverse of what is generally found in romances, where the heroine from a cottage is raised to high rank. Her misfortunes greatly contributed to her reputation. She received an excellent education, and from it she derived noble sentiments, and a love of virtue, which, by long

habit became natural to her. Her father was obliged to remove to England, and her mother remained in France. The want of means of subsistence, induced Madame de Launay too look out for a retreat for herself and her little daughter, which she obtained in the Abbey of St. Sauveur. Madame de la Rochefoucault, the Abbess, generously admitted her without any expense. The nuns, having no employment, fall into that lassitude which fastens on the first object of amusement, and they loved Mademoiselle de Launay with that vehemence, which leisure and solitude communicate to sentiments of all kinds. Though only in

her third year, she said some things which, on account of her age, were thought witticisms. The Abbess was sister to the witty Duke de Rochefoucault, and had herself a great share of that talent; but wit is no preservative against whims, and Mademoiselle de Launay gained her favour by a very trifling incident. "The apartment of the Abbess," says she, "was an infirmary of sick dogs. Here lay the lame, and the incurable. None of any beauty were admitted as patients, the lady well knowing that there would be doors enough open for their relief. One day, just as we were sitting down to supper, I happened to tread on the foot of one of these poor creatures. The Abbess reddened with anger, and a kind person next to whom I was placed, whispered to me to ask pardon. Not comprehending that she was the party offended; I got down from my chair, and went and kneeled before the dog which I had hurt, and, it seems, made my excuse very movingly. This took effect, and placed me high in her favour. The nuns used to divert themselves, in chatting with me. Indeed my understanding was clearer than is usual at such an age. This may be said without vanity, as children, from being accounted prodigies of wit, are known to degenerate into monstrous stupidity."

These happy qualities were cultivated by all the instructions of which her age was capable. She associated with grown up persons, who knew enough to answer all she could ask, and she was perpetually teasing them with questions. Instead of being lulled asleep with tales, her head was furnished with the elements of history, which was so well arranged, that she frequently quoted passages to good purpose. Such aptitude increased the attention of the ladies who interfered in her education.

The Dutchess of Ventadour made

Madame de Launay an offer of being governess to her only daughter, but this kind of life, and especially the inclinations of her pupil being in, compatible with her rigid ideas of devotion, she left the place, and after a year's absence, was joyfully received at the convent. Mademoiselle de Grieu, one of the nuns, having been appointed to the Priory of St. Lewis at Rouen, took Mademoiselle de Launay with her. She was overjoyed to see new objects; and still more, when she arrived at St. Lewis. The convent of St. Lewis was now a little state where she reigned supreme. The chief care of the Abbess and her sister was to please her. No less than four sisters attended her, and the rovings of her giddy fancy kept them all sufficiently employed. When checked in nothing, we desire a great deal. She loved reading; and, as the convent library consisted only of devotional books; she every day employed some hours in reading them. She got some romances, which made such impression on her mind, that she did not feel such strong emotion under her own real adventures as she did for those of the fictitious persons there exhibited. She was seriously told to forbear reading those seductive books: and she obeyed so punctually, that though she had stopped in the height of a most striking incident, she would not proceed to the unravelling of it, and withstood many solicitations to read it privately.

In her studies she perceived the inconvenience of not being acquainted with geometry, and immediately began to study it, which afforded her very useful amusement. The convent of St. Lewis was in bad circumstances, at the time of Madame de Grieu's being made Abbess, and a famine, with which France was visited some years after, reduced it to the lowest misery. The

nuns became discontented, and cabals were soon formed. The Archbishop of Rouen visited the Abbey, and after hearing the many general complaints, declared that Madame de Grieu must either resign the Abbey, or dismiss Mademoiselle de Launay. "I found no way," says she, "to bear the expectation of such a sentence, but by arresting the agitation of my mind, by an intense application to abstract matters; and I believe by early custom, this so-beneficent expedient might be improved to a habit, and thus we may save ourselves a great deal of fruitless disquietude. Malice so on informed me of his grace's determination. The grief of the Abbess and her sister dulled all sense of my own. At last after a long consultation, the Abbess concluded that she would offer to resign the temporal concerns of her house, producing accounts in proof of her care and rectitude, and live with her sister, her nieces and me on her allowance from her family, without taking a single louis\* from her benefice."

Thus some years passed quietly, 'till Mademoiselle de Silly, one of the convent boarders, was sent to visit her father at his seat, in Lower Normandy. Mademoiselle de Launay was seized with the small-pox—she was not concerned either for her life, or her face: the pain was all, and that did not prevent her from desiring to be removed, that no one might suffer from contagion.

The Abbess, though extremely unwilling to part with her, consented to let her spend some time with Mademoiselle de Silly. She arrived at a very handsome seat, something melancholy and ancient, like its owner. "The old Marquis," says she, "was averse to expense, and the

Marchioness, too devout for much visiting; so that for some time I only saw two or three neighbouring gentlemen of whom I had scarce taken any notice till the Chevalier D'Herb came. After a party at ombre, he went away, promising to return and make some stay. I felt that I wished he might come again, and on enquiring into the cause, I said to myself that he was a man of wit and agreeable conversation, much to be wished for in such a lonely place: on examining what grounds I had for my opinion of his wit, and carefully recollecting what he had said, I found only, *Gano, three Matadores, and sans Prendre*\*. At his second visit, when he talked more, this supposed wit vanished. He came frequently, and Mademoiselle de Silly and I judged that one of us had pleased him, but which was not easily discernible. I betted on her side and she on mine; it became a business to both, to discover whose was this conquest; a very slender one indeed; but in solitude objects become inflated, like things put into an exhausted recipient. This contest went no further than pleasantries, yet on hearing that he had formally declared himself, and that it was not for me, I felt a vexation which I did not at first know what to make of. After spending five or six months at Silly, I returned to the convent after promising to return to Silly the next year. This the Marchioness was the more desirous of, as she expected her son to spend the summer there, and with some company he would not be so soon tired of the country. He had been one of the prisoners taken at the battle of Hochstet, and brought to England, where, being threatened with symptoms of a pulmonary consumption, he was allowed to return to France on parole. I met

\* A gold coin worth about twenty shillings.

\* Card terms.

Mademoiselle D'Epinay, I generally walked home to the convent, Monsieur de Rey, who seldom failed being there, handed me home. In the way was a large square, and in the beginning of our acquaintance, he constantly kept along the side of it, whereas he now crossed it; whence I concluded his love to be diminished, at least the whole difference of the diagonal to the two sides of the square."

Mademoiselle de Launay was impatient for the time of returning to Silly, though since the torture of mind she had undergone, from the preference given to her old acquaintance there, her love for her was not quite so passionate. Shortly after the young Marquis arrived. He was at first very reserved and spoke little: his books were his companions. When he did speak, his wit and sense appeared, without any design of his to show them. His sister who had seen him more sociable, was offended at his reserve. "One day," says Mademoiselle de Launay, "walking in a wood, where we imagined ourselves alone, we gave full vent to our indignation; but though unperceived by us, he was so near as to over-hear us. Thus he came to know our undisguised sentiments. On our return to the house, he said to us that he had heard a great deal of ill spoken of him, and not in jest. "Whoever complains of you," answered I, "cannot be in a jocular humour;" this answer pleased him. "So," replied he, "I find in the vale of Auge, what I little expected." He then owned the pleasure with which he had heard our talk, though we had not spared with a joyful reception at the convent, and frequently saw Monsieur de Rey, who still showed a great regard for me, yet from some slight circumstances, I discerned some decrea e in his sentiments, when I visited

him. Since that time he thought us worthy of his company, walking, reading, every thing was now in common."

The Marquis de Silly was obliged to go to court sooner than he wished, as he was not tired of being at home where he found, what he had seldom seen in the world, artless sentiments; he also enjoyed solid conversations, which offered new subjects of science to his mind; his ideas were clear and lively, his expressions simple and noble. Nothing affected, nothing forced ever appeared in his behaviour; he had too much wit to think of showing it; war was his passion, and his attention was fixed on whatever related to it. Ambition was the main-spring of the motions of his soul, and possibly had obscured some of his virtues; it caused his errors and misfortunes. He had perceived how liable Mademoiselle de Launay was to be in love, and from a fear of giving her an opportunity of explaining her sentiments, he was very cautious of finding her alone; she though firmly determined not to say any thing to him, passionately wished for his meeting, which he so much avoided. She wished to show him how very far she was from forgetting what she owed to herself. This satisfaction at length she had in one of their usual walks. Mademoiselle de Silly excused herself as indisposed: the Marchioness, who in all things consulted her son's amusement, bid Mademoiselle de Launay go with him; there was now no receding. They walked to some distance, and he was much more uneasy than she was; he spoke not a word. This little triumph opened her mouth. At first she took notice how delightful the country looked, but this not being far enough from the topics, she was for avoiding, she soared up among the celestial bodies, and ranged through

the whole system of nature. In this lofty region she firmly kept herself, 'till their return home. The Marquis cured of his disquietude, civilly joined in the conversation; which, though the subject was serious, had been carried on with sprightliness and pleasantry. One advantage she reaped from it was, that he saw she knew how to speak, and to be-silent. His departure to court, though it was not to be without a return, gave her a very sensible grief.

In the beginning of winter she returned to the convent, and to give some variety to her thoughts, began to write tales and romances, introducing several pictures of the same original. These tales served instead of confidants, the use of whom she always thought both abject and dangerous.

The old Marquis de Silly died, and Mademoiselle de Launay was not reminded of her promise of returning to Silly house. This circumstance provoked her, and to divert her attention she went to visit Mademoiselle de la Ferté, niece to the president of the parliament of Rouen. Monsieur de la Ferté's house was about four leagues from Silly; it was an old seat of an odd figure, like a gothic R, as many of the ancient seats in Normandy had been built in the shape of the first letter of the owners name. The surrounding country was extremely beautiful and picturesque. Although the situation of her mind was melancholy, she was delighted with her visit; yet she never lost sight of the object which had made her take this journey. Being determined to visit Silly, she prevailed on the Marchioness de Silly to promise to send her carriage to meet her, but she was so eager to go, that she set off in the Caen-stage, leaving Mademoiselle de la Ferté overwhelmed with grief for her departure. She was mortified to find by

conversation of the passengers that the Marquis de Silly had gone to Versailles. She was now on the road to see one whom she would not find, and before she could fix on any plan to adopt, she found herself at St. Pierre sur Dive, where the coach stopped for the night. "Here," says she, "was I at an inn, without acquaintance or relations. I had only a little foot-boy. The frightfulness of the place, and being alone threw me into a trouble, beyond more considerable incidents of my life, because when they happened they were less disproportionate to my degree of strength; courage is of very slow growth in a conventional education. When I was a little come to myself, I asked how far it was to Silly house; I was informed I had passed it only by a league, and that from the place I was, no carriage could go thither, and I must either take a horse or go to Caen which was four leagues further. Had I been told I must get upon a Dromedary, I could not have been more frightened. However, at day-break, I was put upon horse-back, but more like a bundle than a living creature, the foot-boy who had followed me, leading the horse by the bridle. Our guide lost his way, and we were obliged to leave the horse at a brook; and the rest of the way I walked amidst a heavy rain, in the País D'Auge, so famous for dirty roads. At length I reached Silly-house, all over mud, and such a figure that it was some satisfaction to be in no danger of meeting the Marquis. A thousand excuses were made for not sending me word of the disappointment, but the Marquis de Silly's departure was so precipitate, as not to admit of moment's delay. I feigned myself pleased, although little cause I had, and soon returned to Monsieur de la Ferté's at Rouen, where I found every thing as I had left it, except

the sudden death of Monsieur de Rey. Although I had never loved him, and his love for me had been at an end, it gave me a very sensible concern."

The remainder of the year she spent very quietly in the convent. The Abbess was seized with a dangerous illness which terminated in death in a few days. She was a very amiable character, such a fund of real goodness, so much sweetness, so much concern for others and neglect of herself, and such punctuality and attention to all her duties, were rarely combined in an Abbess.

Madame de Grieu had always lived with her sister the Abbess, and the Abbey was by right hers, but the former cabals were again in motion; she might have removed to the Abbey of Jouarre as a nun, but she would not forsake Mademoiselle de Launay, and a young niece who was equally dear to her. She accordingly removed with them to a convent in Paris, until something more advantageous might offer. Mademoiselle de Launay found the necessity of strengthening her mind with steady principles. She determined, rather than be a burden to her friends, to bear penury or seek a service; for certainly it is only by our personal behaviour that we are debased; we frequently sink under want, not so much from its weight as our own weakness; yet, not to be extreme in her firmness, she accepted of ten pistoles from a female friend. She now began to find a change in her situation, hitherto she had always lived where she was the chief object of attention, and where every trifle, if it concerned her, made an event. One day she had an head-ache—this formerly would have set the whole house in a bustle, abbess, sisters, and maids, now she was merely asked if she wanted any thing.

At length Mademoiselle de Launay went to reside at the convent La Presentation\*, where she had just sufficient to pay a quarter's allowance. "A little before the time was expired," says she, "I was taken so ill that I had some hopes of dying, but I was disappointed. One never dies in the right time. When I was recovering, my sister, who lived with the Dutchess de la Ferté, came to see me, and with great transports of joy, congratulated me on the fortune which she imagined was now before me. She told me that going to Versailles with the Dutchess de la Ferté, she had mentioned me, and said that I knew all that could be known, and enumerated to her Grace the sciences, of which she imagined I was mistress of. The Dutchess being ignorant, thought I was a prodigy. In the whole world there was not a person more ardent in her fancies. She arrived at Versailles with her mind full of this supposed prodigy, which she spoke of in all companies, and especially at Madame de Ventadour's † her sister. Her imagination became inflamed by the warmth of her elocution, and she said a hundred things more than had been told her. My sister after this narrative, told me that I must by all means wait upon her lady and thank her: I was not mistress of a gown fit to make my appearance in, but borrowed one from a convent boarder for a few hours. We got to the Dutchess' just at her awakening. She was delighted at the sight of me, and said a thousand things in my praise. After a few questions on her side, and some plain, and possibly insipid answer on mine; "Bless me," says she, "never creature talked so

\*An order of nuns established in France in 1627.

† Then governess to Lewis the fifteenth.

finely ! She comes just in the nick of time to write a letter for me to Monsieur Desnarets which I must send him immediately: Come Mademoiselle, some paper shall be brought to you, and you need only write." "But what shall I write Madam?" answered I, much out of countenance, "You may give it what turn you please; it must be right: I insist on his complying with what I ask." But Madame," replied I, "still I should know what you would say to him." "No, no, you understand me." What could I gather from such a vague sallies? but it was in vain to insist on any further explanation? At last, connecting the broken sentences which came from her, I guessed the matter in hand. At length I finished the letter, and with a palpitating heart for the success of it, went and delivered it to her. "Well," cried she, "this is just the whole of what I was for saying to him; 'tis really strange she should hit my thoughts so well. Hetty your sister is a surprizing girl. Oh! since she has such a knack at writing I must have another letter to my steward that may be despatched while I dress." "There was no asking a second time what she intended to say. A torrent of words issued from her mouth with a rapidity, which all my attention could not keep pace with; I was still more embarrassed with this second essay. She had named her Counsellor and Attorney, who constituted a part of this letter. They were both utterly unknown to me and unfortunately I took the name of the one for that of the other. "The business is well conched," said she after reading my letter," but how could a girl of your wit, call my Counsellor by the Attorney's name?" By this she discovered the limits of my genius; yet by good fortune, it did not en-

tirely lose me in her esteem. By the time I had finished these dispatches, she was dressed, and in a hurry to be at Versailles. I followed her to the coach, and when she had seated herself, and my sister whom she took with her, had got in.— "Suppose," said she to my sister, "I should take her with us? Come in Mademoiselle, I'll show you to Madame de Ventadour." This order was a thunder-clap to me, but the time for having a will of my own, and opposing that of others, was now over. After asking me innumerable questions; "to be sure," said she, "as you know so many things, you understand casting a nativity; there is nothing in my mind comes up to that." I told her that I had not the least idea of the science. "And why," said she "learn so many which are of no use?" I assured her that I had never learned any; but without minding me she was now running on in praise of geomancy, chiromancy, &c. related to me several predictions concerning herself, which, she was sure would be accomplished, her last night's dream and other equally important incidents. I listened to the whole with great submission, but little faith. I was introduced to Madame de Ventadour, who received me with all imaginable condescension, she talked to me about my mother who had been governess to her daughter, and her intention of finding me a suitable place. The Dutchess de la Ferté had made such a stir about me that I was become an object of curiosity. A thousand people flocking about me, to have a sight of me, and to ask me questions." "Here Madam," said the Dutchess de la Ferté to the Dutchess de Noailles, introducing Mademoiselle de Launay, "is the person I was speaking to you of, who has so much wit, and knows so

many things. Come, Mademoiselle, speak; you'll see Madam how she talks." Perceiving that Mademoiselle de Launay hesitated, she thought of assisting her, as the beginning of a song is sometimes hummed over to a different singer, she added, "Let us have a word or two about religion, and then you shall talk of something else. This ridiculous scene was repeated in other houses, and I had to be exhibited like a monkey which shows tricks at a fair."

Shortly after the Dutchess du Maine\* persuaded Mademoiselle de Launay, to accept a place in her establishment. The exaltation of the Dutchess' family was then at the highest point; since her marriage with the Duke d' Maine, by her active solicitude in procuring for him a rank equal to her own, they had gradually attained all the honours of the princes of the royal blood, and she availed herself of some favourable occurrences to obtain that famous edict, which enitled them and their descendants to the succession. The precipitate loss of so many of the princes of the blood, had produced and facilitated that scheme which was then executed without any contradiction, and afterwards occasioned such animosities. But her prosperity, blinding the catastrophe to which it led, made her court a brilliant scene of joy and festivity.

Lewis XIV dying on the first of September, the assembly of the parliament, was held the next day. The king directed by his will a regency, specifying the members and nominating the Duke d' Orleans, president. Every thing was to be decided by a majority of votes; to this assembly was committed the tutelage of the young king; the superintendance of his education &c. to the Duke du Maine†. This an-

\* Daughter of the prince of Condé, commonly called the Great Condé.

† An illegitimate son to Lewis XIV.

thority would have given him great power if he had retained it, but the power of kings, however despotic, does not reach beyond the grave.

The woman whose business was to tell the Dutchess du Maine stories until she fell asleep, being ill, Mademoiselle de Launay was appointed to read in her place. "The Dutchess being mortified that the Duke d' Orleans should have so much power," says Mademoiselle de Launay, "determined to apply to the king of Spain, to require a meeting of the states of France, to enquire into the conduct of the Duke D' Orleans. The regent having been informed of this application the Dutchess received positive advice, from more than one quarter, that she was to be taken into custody. She used often to talk to me, and would say that whatever place she was carried to, she would ask that I should go with her. This, if matters came to that melancholy pass, was what I most passionately wished. We both thought that, considering her rank, the place of confinement would be one of the royal seats, with a suitable retinue. It was not in nature to imagine any thing of the harsh treatment she afterwards went through. I was under this melancholy expectation, when one evening, being fatigued both in body and mind, I threw myself on a couch in my chamber and fell asleep. In the midst of my nap I was aroused by a woman, who told me in haste that her mistress sent her to inform me that the Dutchess du Maine was to be arrested that night. These words quite dispelled my somnolency, and I found that she was sent by the Marchioness de Lambert, so famous for the purity of her morals, and the sublimity of her intellects, and than whom the Dutchess du Maine had not a firmer friend, though in this affair she had not shared her confidence. Without loss of time, I in-

formed the Dutchess, but she was so little concerned, as to turn it into a subject of jocularity ; at length she requested me to read to her, in order to put her asleep. I took Machiavel's *Decades*, and folded down at the chapter, of *Conspiracies*. I shewed it to her, and she smiling said, " Away with this evidence against us, it would be one of the strongest." Our expectations this time were premature ; the morning came, and matters still remained in *statu quo*. Some measures, which remained to be taken, obliged the regent to defer the execution of his designs for some days. Four or five days had passed away pretty quietly, and after having employed part of the night in discoursing to me, the Dutchess fell asleep at six o'clock in the morning, and I withdrew. I was just beginning to dose, when I heard the door open, I imagined that the Dutchess had sent for me again, and half awake, said, " who is there ? " an unknown voice answered, " I come in the king's name." I was at no loss about his meaning, and he ordered me in no very mannerly accent to get up. I obeyed without reply. It was the 29th of December, before day break, but when they brought a candle I perceived my company to be an officer of the guards, and two musqueteers ; the officer read an order for guarding me in sight. The whole house swarmed with guards and musqueteers. I was under horrible distress of mind about the Dutchess du Maine, doing myself the honour to look upon this visit to me, only as a consequence of that princess being put under arrest. My guards would not gratify my affectionate solicitude about her, I only knew that the Lieutenant of the life guards had brought the king's warrant for carrying her to prison, to which she submitted with the most amiable serenity."

The Captain of the life guards left the Dutchess du Maine at Essonne, from whence she was taken to Dijon citadel. This was a reverse of fortune for a princess accustomed to splendour and homage, always surrounded by friends and dependents, and who thought herself alone when she was not in a crowd of servile flatterers. The Duke du Maine was taken to the Citadel of Dourlans in Picardy.

At seven o'clock in the evening, Mademoiselle de Launay was taken to the Bastile. After crossing several draw-bridges, she was brought to a large chamber, whose walls was covered with inscriptions written with charcoal, expressing the very opposite sentiments and condition of the former occupiers. A little rush chair was brought her to sit down ; two stones for supporting a fire which was kindled, and her light was a small candle end stuck against the wall. All these conveniences having been provided, the governor withdrew, which was followed by the harsh noise of five or six large rusty locks, and twice the number of bolts. The governor at length permitted Rondle, (a woman who always attended her at Seaux) to go to the Bastile ; " she related," says Mademoiselle de Launay, " all that she had heard and seen, the day I was taken into custody ; when she had finished her story I made her begin again that my attention might be diverted. Several days passed and I waited with anxiety for the time that I should be examined. I used to prepare answers for every thing that could be said to me. I believe I had collected enough to make a pretty sizeable volume ; but except the exercise of my genius, I might as well have been unemployed. The governor of the Bastile sent me a pack of cards, and some volumes of Cleopatra. With this trash I wiled away the time till some-

thing better should come, and played at piquet with Rondle. Being, at my departure, taken up with other thoughts than about what I might want, I now found the disagreeable effects of this absence of mind, for at the end of a few days I found myself in want of every thing."

She was in some respects, in a worse situation than the heroine of a romance, when she elopes from her friends, as she had not a change of clothes, nor the usual resource, a casket of jewels, with which these imaginary and illustrious personages are always provided. She was shut up in the Bastile, debarred from all intercourse with her friends, and had reason to fear real misfortunes; the heroine of a romance always finds some means of escape.

....."Let solid walls impound  
The captive fair, and dig a moat around;  
Let there be brazen locks and bars of steel,  
And keepers cruel, such as never feel;  
With not a single note the purse supply,  
And when she begs let men and maids  
Deny;  
Be windows those from which she dares  
not fall,  
And help so distant that she dare not call;  
Still means of freedom will some power  
devise,  
And from the baffled ruffian snatch the  
prize."

CRABBE'S BOROUGH.

Mademoiselle de Launay's greatest alarm was lest she should be put to torture to force her to confess. She could not avoid anticipating this misfortune as she dreaded the force of excessive torture against the strongest resolution. Before she had got over her fears she was called upon in order to be interrogated by the commissioners. After innumerable questions were asked, she was permitted to retire without betraying any confusion or fear. In her confinement she seemed to be quite free from that lassitude, which is so much dreaded under confinement, by feeling so much agitation and

fear in the first part of her imprisonment, and when tranquillity began to dawn she excluded ennui by a variety of occupations and amusements. After intense reading she relaxed her mind by more trifling pursuits; by this means she found that what renders insipid the most spirited diversions of those trifling characters, whole lives are but a round of indulgence and pleasure, is that with them they lose the genuine effect of relieving the mind or body when wearied.

Mademoiselle de Launay was pretty well informed of every thing that passed out of the Bastile, though this was generally a source of additional torture. News, on which prisoners feed with such avidity, is poison to them—they come to a knowledge of a part, and remain ignorant of the other. The happiest condition to them is absolute ignorance of all that passes out of the prison-doors.

"In our prison," says she, "we merely heard a vague report of a discovery, but this had been so often talked of, that no credit was given to it. At last, Monsieur le Blanc who had not made his appearance within our walls for some time, came here about the end of November. He told me that I should have saved him a great deal of trouble if I had, on my former examination, satisfied him concerning what I knew of the Dutchess du Maine's affair, with which I was perfectly acquainted; that she herself had set it forth in an exact declaration, and that my secrecy was now quite unseasonable. I answered that it did not appear to me that I was thought to know so much; in effect they had only examined me once, and that very slightly. "Besides," added I, "if the Dutchess du Maine herself has spoken, what can I say to give you further insight? Who should know so well as

herself what concerns her?" "At least," replied he, "you cannot deny having given to her highness letters from Spain." I answered, "That the letters which I might have received, were for myself; that some were sent me from different countries, no wise relating to the Dutchess du Maine." "Monsieur le Blanc, replied, that I knew the whole affair, and that I must speak, or remain in the Bastile all my life." "Well, sir," said I to him, "that's a settlement to such a one as I, who have no fortune." "It is not," answered he, "a very agreeable situation." "Neither," said I, "would I chuse it; but contentedly will I stay in it, rather than purchase my releasement by any fiction. For my part, I declare to you, that if I knew nothing, I can tell you nothing; and that if I have been entrusted with any thing, still less would I tell it. I am easy when I understand that the Dutchess is released." "It must be owned," said he, "that the Dutchess has had strange confidants; and it would have been well for her, had she trusted no other than you—as to your own concerns"——Those, sir, are not worth disturbing myself about." "Whence this confidence," said he, "has your nativity been cast?" "The nativity of one born in such a bad fortune as mine, is cast of itself," answered I. Monsieur le Blanc went away but indifferently satisfied with my answers.

To relieve my solitude, I wrote the following portrait of myself, at the desire of a friend:

"Launay is of middling stature, lean, thin and disagreeable. Her temper and mind are, like her person, nothing amiss, yet nothing disagreeable. Those who are without birth or fortune, being supposed to want education, what little worth they have is the more esteemed; yet she has had an excellent one,

and 'tis from it she may derive all the good that may belong to her, as principles of virtue, noble sentiments, rules of conduct, and which now by habit are become as it were natural. It has ever been her folly to be willing to be rational; she has never been able to get the better of a vivacity of temper, or even to bring it to an appearance of equality; which has often rendered her offensive to her superiors, disagreeable in society, and quite insupportable to those under her. Happily fortune has not put it in her power to bring many into this misery. With all these defects, she has acquired a kind of reputation, for which she is purely indebted to two fortuitous occasions; one displaying something of wit in her, and the other shewing that she was not without discretion and firmness.

"She has given up her life to serious occupations, rather for strengthening her reason, than embellishing her wit, of which she makes little account. No opinion appears so clear to her as to fix her, but she is as ready to reject as to espouse it; hence it is, that if she disputes, it is generally out of pettishness. She has read a great deal, yet knows no more than is requisite to understand what is said on any subject whatever, and to avoid talking impertinently. Her predominant passion is a love of liberty; a very unfortunate passion in her, who has passed the greatest part of her time in servitude. She has ever had great sensibility in friendship, yet engaged more by the merits and virtues of her friends, than by their sentiments for her."

In 1720, after the Duke and Dutchess du Maine were permitted to return to Seaux, Mademoiselle de Launay was released from prison, when she found, that her small share in an affair which had been so much talked of in France, had imparted a kind of lustre to her. The steady

consistency of her conduct had acquired her great applause. The warmth of her former friends, pleased with this kind of success, revived. Her imprisonment had restored her to the Dutchess de la Ferte's favour, and she proposed that Mademoiselle de Launay should marry Monsieur Dacier\*, but the Dutchess du Maine would not consent, and at the first mention of the overture, she declared that she would permit of no settlement which would deprive her of Mademoiselle de Launay, at the same time she commissioned one of her friends to look out amongst the Helvetic corps, commanded by the Duke du Maine, for one who would marry a woman without birth, youth, beauty, or fortune, a discovery which the thirteen cantons put together, could scarce afford. At length she found an officer who had a small house, with abundance of cows and sheep about it; a man of birth, and widower, with two daughters, who had met with but little preferment after a long service, and an irreproachable discharge of his duty. The Dutchess du Maine approved of this offer. The overture was well received by Monsieur de Stahl, who however asked some days to return a positive answer. He lived on the most affectionate terms with his daughters; and his first preliminary was their free consent to come under the care

of a step-mother; an appellation always odious. However after much reluctance they yielded to their father's inclinations; who in this offer saw before him a sure and easy fortune. He was only a lieutenant in the Swiss guards. The captain of his company was, for some time, in consequence of an apoplexy, rendered incapable of doing duty. Monsieur de Stahl's demand was to fill the captain's post, when it should fall vacant, and that in the meantime he should have the title of commandant of the company. The Dutchess du Maine consented to all these conditions. "The pension," says Mademoiselle de Launay, "which the Duke du Maine had granted me on my releasement, was secured to me, but the melancholy disposition I brought with me to my new mansion, contributed not a little to put me out of humour with the place. Monsieur de Stahl's daughters received me with coolness. He was vexed at my disagreeable reception, and I was vexed to find myself married; a confusion spread through the whole house, of which all the company seemed to partake." Her amiable qualities, however, soon gained her the affection of her husband's daughters, who continued to reside with her; and at her death she divided her property between them and her favourite convent of St. Lewis. She died at Gennevilliers on the 15th of June, 1750.

\* A celebrated classical scholar.

#### DETACHED ANECDOTES.

##### MARRIAGE CONTRACTS ENTERED INTO BEFORE MAGISTRATES.

DURING the time of Cromwell's administration, marriages were solemnized before the civil magistrate, and in this way sixty-six couple were joined together at Knaresbo-

rough, in Yorkshire, during the short space of four years. The bans were published on three separate days before the marriage, sometimes at the market-cross, and sometimes in the church. The following is a copy of one of the certificates:—